

BILLERICAY & WICKFORD Gazette

Wednesday, August 4, 2010

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I Do – Your guide to
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Starts page 29

Inside



Gazette
speed
team hit
Crays Hill

Page 3



Road
works
chaos in
Wickford

Page 4



Police
announce
big budget
cuts

Page 5

NOTICE IS SERVED: TRAVELLERS FACE EVICTION IN DAYS

Illegal residents given 28 days to leave site or bailiffs will move in

Joshua Farrington
editorial@gazettenews.co.uk

TRAVELLERS living on an illegal site have been warned they are just days away from an eviction after notice was served at Hovefields.

The council issued a formal eviction notice last week, giving the families, who have been living on the Wickford site illegally, 28 days to pack up and leave.

Should they remain, bailiffs will move in on August 31 to clear the site and turn over plots to prevent them coming back.

But travellers on the yards say they will not be moving far, with some threatening to make their way to the condemned Dale Farm, in neighbouring Crays Hill.

Hovefield resident Richard Sheridan, 37, said: "We'll be here until they turn up to get rid of us."

"We'll use the whole 28 days to see if anything can be done, but it doesn't look good for us."

He admitted that the families from the eight yards due to be demolished would probably go quietly - but threatened not to go far.

"I don't think there will be much of a fight - people here are tired of battling the council over this site."

"I have another plot of land I can go to in Wickford, and they will have a tougher time trying to shift me from there."

"I'll stick around to make problems for the council yet."



WHERE NEXT? Diana O'Brien is not sure where she and her family can go next

He added: "Some caravans will make their way to Dale Farm as well. Once they're there, it will take the Army to get rid of them."

Mike McCarthy, 60, a grandfather living in Hovefields, off Hovefield Avenue, with said: "I've been here for six years and it is my home."

"I've seen evictions before, where they just come along with a bulldozer and tow the caravans away."

Bailiffs

"What can you do? There will be so many police and bailiffs around, there won't be anything we can do. It makes me feel sick."

Sisters Donna and Diana O'Brien, aged 23 and 19 respectively, said they were not sure where they could go next.

Donna said: "They've offered us houses but we don't want them be-



ILLEGAL SITE: Travellers at the Hovefields site have been given a 28-day eviction notice

0208 250 0222

cause it's not our way - would they want a trailer?

"When they evict us, we'll have to go on the road."

"If people saw a stray dog on the road they would try and help it, but we get treated worse than that."

The full eviction at Hovefields follows the demolition of vacant plots at the start of July.

Basildon District Council's leader Tony Ball said: "It is a great shame that we had to take this action, bearing in mind the work the council has undertaken over the past few years to resolve this matter peacefully and amicably."

"However, we do have to protect the district's green belt from unlawful development."

"This action has been challenged legally many times, but the courts have supported the council's stance."

"Council officers will continue to work with the travellers to assist them in their efforts to relocate and access any services they need, such as health professionals or social services."

Wedding Open Day

SATURDAY 14TH AUGUST 2010 10.00AM - 4.00PM

Marygreen Manor Hotel, London Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4NS

For more information: T: 01277 225252 E: info@marygreenmanor.co.uk W: www.marygreenmanor.co.uk



BOB FROST